



NEWSLETTER - January 2008



President's Page: Greetings - and Happy new year. I hope you all have had wonderful holidays, and got everything and more that you wanted for Christmas. As for Ben and I, there has been a dearth of actual airtime. We were so desperate to see what our gliders looked like the weekend before last that we took them to the park for some ground handling.

Hopefully the weather will mellow a bit and we will be able to get back into the local air soon.

We are off to Patagonia end of February to try out a new area there. This will be an unsupported adventure into the Futaleufu Area. We are very excited and absorbed with the challenge of how to get all the camping and flying gear from here to there.

Also - Please remember to pay your dues. Send to JR at the address below. We will be having both the Memorial Day and Labor Day fly-in at Seneca Rocks again this year. We'll try to have the parachute pack sometime in the spring at Larry Huffman's convenience (assuming he's available and still willing).

Take care - Have Fun
L.E. Herrick

Mountaineer Hang Gliding Assoc. Secretary/Treasurer's Report 2007

Presented By: Douglas C. "JR" Niedermeyer

The annual MHGA meeting was held on December 1, 2007 and the LaVale Public Library. The turnout was better than it had been the previous year owing, in part, to the potentially soarable forecast for the day. Present at the meeting were: Ben and LE Herrick, Marvin Presley, Florent Fumey and his friend, Magali, Larry and Lesa Ball, Jim Rowan, Mark Gardner, and Pat Halfhill.

We started the fiscal year with \$2848.55 in the club's checking account and ended it with \$2717.09 for an overall deficit of \$131.46. One of the reasons for this was that we had only 28 members in 2007 compared to 32 in 2006 (and as a further comparison, we had 46 members in 1997). Our expenses have remained relatively stable with the campground fee (\$318), landowner donations (\$300) and site insurance (\$250) being the largest expenditures. There was some discussion about either increasing the \$40 annual dues or eliminating the campground fee subsidy for one of the fly-ins, but like any good bureaucracy, we decided to do nothing different, at least for 2008, and then see where we stand at the end of the year.

We decided to give Christmas hams and/or calendars to the same group of landowners as last year. Marvin and I handled that mission on Dec. 22nd and it sounded like everyone was doing well and happy to have us (the flying community) around. Larry and Lesa played Santa Claus for the Spruce Knob and North Mtn landowners and LE and Ben gave a Paragliding Calendar to the Bennets the folks who own the Spruce Knob PG LZ.

Club officers for 2008:

President – LE Herrick
Vice President – Will Jenkins
Secretary/Treasurer – Jim Rowan
Board of Director – Larry Ball
Board of Director – Marvin Presley

***Please pay your 2008 dues of \$40 (\$60 for a family)
by writing a check to: MHGA and sending it to:
Jim Rowan, 13818 Florida Ave, Cresaptown, MD
21502. You'll be glad you did!!!***

Tales of Adventure - John and Mark Out West

By Mark Gardner



John Fenner and Mark Gardner took a road trip to **LAKEVIEW**, OR and then to the **KING** Mountain Meet. This is their story.

Mark picked up John in Pittsburg at midnight on Wed, June 27th. They thought it might take two days or so and were afraid they might be late registering for the Up-teenth Annual Lakeview Fly-In. But they blasted through seven and a half states and arrived in Lakeview, OR. only 36 hrs later.

It looked blown out that hot Friday afternoon, so they hunted for a shady spot to pitch their tent, (which mark properly refers to as the Taj Mahal,) they found one at Goose Lake State park, 15 miles south of Lakeview. It was a little out of the way, but was possibly the best camping spot either had ever had in their combined 95 years of existence.

Lakeview launch



The Paragliding Nationals concluded the next day, and the boys watched some excellent and not-so-excellent launches from **Blackcap**, (the launch located above town). Later, both John and Mark had beautiful, evening glass-off flights. (Mark used ALL of his launching skills to clear the line of jagged mini-boulders arrayed down-hill from launch)

Under the cover of darkness they crashed the paragliders' party. It featured a great, live, 'New-Grass' band and some great beer.



Frank Brown from Brasil placed first, and Dean Stratton placed 2nd and is the new US Champion. After the awards and dinner we danced into the night to the awesome bluegrass of the Blue Mountain Ramblers.



Cheers to whoever started the **massage Train**.

The next day the two found their way up to the launches on Sugar Hill, (actually in N.

California). However the winds were light and they were all by themselves. They demonstrated profoundly good judgment, (balked,) and decided not to launch until they had the advice of local counsel.

The next day our intrepid boys reported to Meet H-Q and met lots of people, including Meryl, a lady of a certain age, certainly over 75), who would be their driver for the next week or so. They also hooked up with several western pilots, (you can tell them from the hats and boots.) In particular, Ken Muscio and Dave, 'Doc' Sorl became good friends.

Back to Sugar on Monday in the company of a bunch of pilots: Mark made the difficult run from Sugar to Lakeview, (about 27 miles). John also got across Fandango Pass and escaped a notorious valley known as "the Magnet" but landed about 5 miles south of town.

Tuesday, Mark had a fighting sled from Sugar to Sugar's large but tricky bail-out LZ. John went north again. But not handling the crossing very well, he landed only about 6 miles north of Sugar. Says John of his landing: "I was fooled into thinking the giant LZ I had selected was flat. It was actually pretty well-sloped. On final I had enough time to knit a sweater." (Many people can relate, John. Ed.)

Wednesday the 4th the boys went up to the new site where a ramp had been built the previous fall, but the locals were waiting for Ken to christen it as they had a lack of intestinal fortitude concerning the 7 to 1 glide to the still untried LZ.

Ken got up of course and flew for a couple of hrs till he ended up at the south end of Abert rim.

Mike Tingy (ramp builder and well known local pilot) also got up and toured the Lakeview area for several hrs until he decided to land near the party at Jimmy's in town.

Neither the boys or anyone else present elected to fly as the southerly's were turning on making for a rotory/ sinky / scawry trip to the far far LZ.

The next day found the boys at Buck, an easterly site @15 miles south of Sugar.

Ken took the day off, and drove for us. Fortunately for him John sledded, gardner went 20 and Doc ended up slightly short of gardner after getting to 16,800.

Ray Burger on his rigid went 143 and Nevada Dennis went 95 on his Ultrasport.

Gardner and Doc decided to take Friday off, so Gardner drove for John and Ken as they flew north from Sugar. They both landed on the north side of Fandango Pass in one of the NO LAND zones. Gardner used his considerable diplomatic skill to avoid jail time for the crew. (John insists that this article point out that though he landed with Ken, he out-climbed him one time. Ed.)

Saturday, Mark worked VERY hard to make the run from Sugar to Lakeview again. The rest of the crew landed various distances north of launch and watched, cheering, as Mark flew over. (Not really.)

Sunday the boys experienced the sweet agony of Hadley Butte. There, after a long day of hang-waiting, they had the misfortune of witnessing a badly-blown launch, on a full-race Attack-Falcon, no less. The old, (almost elderly,) pilot suffered a dislocated elbow and other minor, bloody injuries. The boys helped the pilot back to his friend's vehicle, packed up the wreckage, then went to retrieve several pilots who had launched much, much earlier. They found the poor sods in a hot, dry, fly-infested LZ, crouching downwind of a fire in the hope that the smoke would keep the flies away. Our boys to the rescue again.

Monday the boys drove west out of Lakeview to visit the Pacific and along the way to fly Wood Rat Mountain. They arrived at Woodrat somewhat late in the afternoon. Another long, dusty road to launch, which, by the way, is one of two large, beautiful, gravel ramps. John was rewarded with a long, sweet, bouyant sled to a local vineyard, (closed, unfortunately). Gardner missed a short window and had to break down on top. Woodrat site is well-run and obviously well-loved by the locals. Go there.

On the way to the coast the boys drove through a Redwood forest and John got to hug a huge tree. They then rocketed to the coast for some seafood. The Oregon coastline was a great surprise. At one overlook, the boys were inspired to stop for photos. They witnessed what they thought had to be a bald eagle hunting fish. It hovered on the sea-breeze, swooped to the water's surface, climbed and circled, then repeated hovering.

After driving several hours north to Coos Bay, Mark and John reluctantly cut east, away from the ocean, and made for King Mountain, Moore, Idaho. Driving all day, the boys made it only as far as Bend, Or. On the way, however, they saw the spectacular Three Sisters, still snow-covered in the height of summer.



**King
LZ**

After driving across a burned desert east of Bend, they arrived at King on Wednesday afternoon. Did not fly Wednesday but checked in with the Meet organizers and set up camp amidst a small lake of tents in Moore's town park. They joined up with a large, ungainly group of pilots who had already found drivers. This was easy, and neighborly, however, they later found that it was a pain in the ass to have so many pilots on the same radio frequency.

On Thursday, Mark went OTB for 15 miles to the feet of the Lemhi's. John fought the good fight but could not tune in to the dastardly thermals generated in front of the mountain. Friday, (a 100 mile day), Mark had his turn sledding and retrieved. John chose not to launch after witnessing lots of marginal, hot, high, low/cross-wind launches.

Saturday, Mark again landed 15 miles out. Not wanting to land at the same LZ as the previous day, he eked out an additional mile or so, landing with other gliders. There, by the grace of the gods, he landed 45 degrees crosswind in a 10 mile-an-hour, southerly breeze. And lived to tell it! John finally put it together and climbed to 15,000 feet. On his way up, however, he heard a pilot caution others not to go on course because of over-development. What to do with eight grand of altitude? Pulling out of Harsh lift, he ran for it: 105 degrees off- course and up-wind, and made it almost seven miles south to Arco, Idaho. His slightly cross-wind landing cost him a tip wand.

Sunday, the last day of the meet had lots of overcast, so everyone expected sled rides.

Mark finally launched and was rewarded with his most enjoyable, non-bar-gripping flight of the trip. He got to 12,000 ft. and took a pleasant farewell tour of King Mt. and the local knobblies. He landed near the Park for a convenient retrieve. John's glider had decided that enough was enough and basically took a nap on the way to the LZ. Bruce Engen, a Region 9 pilot, made the excellent decision to wait for the overcast to break up. He earned a 60-mile flight to Dubois late in the day.

That evening, after an excellent awards ceremony, the boys decided to blow town that night. They rocked again and arrived back in the Pitt @ 10:00 am Tuesday morning.

Till next time

- the boys

MHGA Airtimes – the only edition

11/3/07; High Pt; NNW 10 – 15+ mph; A fairly windy day that got stronger after JR (S2) and Gardinator (Aeros GP) launched. Lift was in the 3 – 400 fpm range and was pretty consistent, especially over the Dogpit in front of launch, but the climb rates were petering out to nothing about 3300' – 3500' at the inversion layer. Gardinator and JR both got low at one point below the NW Cliffs. The giant American flag in the infield at the Fairgrounds was sticking straight out and showing mostly strong westerly winds on the ground with occasional swings around to the northeast. That was enough to convince JR that discretion was the better part of valor. He told Gardinator that if they got back up, he was heading down the ridge for the sanctuary of Zirks where the LZ's have much less pucker-factor on strong days. After getting back up to 3300', JR headed south and was treated to the airborne sight of a couple dozen RC sailplanes that were part of a slope-soaring competition on top of the Knobley Mtn ridge. From above, they looked like a swarm of bees and he was glad that they were several hundred feet below him as he flew past. JR got to the SW Cliffs at 2900' and started to make the jump out front towards Barton's LZ, but he got drilled flying into the headwind and/or wimped out. He ended up back at Zirks, but below launch and was slowly scraped off the ridge landing in the main LZ after 1.5 hr flight. JR was joined there by Gardinator about 15 minutes later and he even pulled off a good landing.

12/1/07; High Pt; N 2 – 8 mph; After the MHGA meeting, everyone adjourned to the LZ where they were met by Pete Lehmann. The original plan was to do some cutting below launch and then set-up, but the crew decided that it looked good enough that flying should take precedence over site maintenance. Ben (Mistral) was off first and sledged to

the LZ, LE (Mistral) was next off and she managed to get a few minutes hanging out over the NW Cliffs before succumbing to the pull of gravity. Pete (S2), Florent (Sigma 6), JR (S2) took sleds or extended sleds, before Pat H (S2) and Larryboy (T2) managed to get brief soaring flights. Pete and Florent went back up for a second try and managed to stick for about 20 minutes before joining their comrades in the LZ. Marvin (Talon) and Gardinator (Aeros GP) set up, but DNF. It wasn't the most awesome flying day of the season, but it was still good fun and nice to be able to fly after the meeting. The fun and hang-lying continued over drinks and dinner at Ruby Tuesdays in LaVale afterwards.